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the way, enrich faith, since it gives the picture—immediately certain to faith—of Jesus Christ, still more distinctly, more vividly, more exactly; and, especially, it can compel faith to abandon false foundations. But to Kähler's view that faith cannot find its *foundation* in a historical Jesus first elaborated and guaranteed through historical inquiry, I agree. Else what becomes of faith, in the meantime? And how long must it wait for results universally accredited by the investigators?

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DOGMATIQUE CHRÉTIENNE. Par JULES BOVON, Docteur en Théologie, Professeur à la Faculté de Théologie de l'Église Évangélique Libre du Canton de Vaud. Lausanne: Georges Bridel & Cie., Éditeurs. In two volumes, 1895 and 1896. Pp. 549 and 584. Fr. 22.

THIS treatise, which is the second part of a comprehensive *Study upon the Work of Redemption*, of which the first part is an elaborate biblical theology,¹ is a thorough piece of work according to the standards of German scholarship. Indeed, though written in French, it may be styled in a large degree a German book, for it refers constantly to German writers, and discusses at length at the proper points the theories of the great German leaders, such as Schleiermacher, Rothe, Julius Müller, Ritschl, etc., while not neglecting the Reformers, or contemporary French and English theologians. But whatever Professor Bovon may have drawn from other sources, his masters have been the Germans.

Nor is it difficult to locate our author among the schools of German thought. While he differs from Ritschl upon many a point, and preserves his relative independence of him by frequent criticisms, still, upon the whole, the method of this work is Ritschlian, and the results,

¹ *Théologie du Nouveau Testament*, consisting of two volumes of respectively 549 and 604 pp.; Fr. 22. The first volume, entitled *La Vie et l'enseignement de Jésus*, contains what is in effect an introduction to the gospels, in respect to which the writer maintains a position of moderate conservatism; a treatment, in the large rather than in detail, of the life of Jesus, and a discussion of the teaching of Jesus. The second volume is entitled *L'Enseignement des Apôtres*, which he discusses under the heads: (1) "Le Judéo-Christianisme"; (2) "Le Paulinisme," to which is attached by way of appendix "Le Paulinisme du second degré ou la doctrine de l'épître aux Hébreux;" (3) "Les Épîtres Catholiques," (4) "L'Apocalypse," and (5) "La Théologie Johannique."

particularly at the main points, such as the Christology, are substantially Ritschlian. Whatever, then, any thinker may judge of the correctness or the value of Ritschl's theology, the same judgment he will have to pass in the main upon this work.

The plan of the work is in some respects new, and is adapted to the analytic and inductive method of arriving at dogmatic statements. The first book treats of the "principles," man considered as a personality, religion, and God; the second of sin; the third of grace; the fourth of eternity. Under this general scheme, which is not altogether unique, it is the constant purpose of the author to bring in every theological topic exactly where it is required in the development, that is to say, exactly where it has been prepared for by the previous work, and where it has become a necessity for the development of the following points. In this arrangement he has shown great skill, and deserves the credit of having done much to facilitate the labors of others who shall hereafter seek to erect a dogmatic structure which shall be really progressive, "*aus einem Guss*," and inductive. Thus, for example, when God is discussed among the "principles" of the system, it is his existence, his attributes in a more general sense, and his works of creation and providence which occupy the attention. The justice of God, and hence the full idea of his holiness, is not discussed till the topic of sin is reached. In the same way, the doctrine of the Scriptures is postponed till the third book, where it enters, first under the head of the preparation of salvation, revelation, and then, still later, after the work of Christ has been developed, under the head of the diffusion of the knowledge of salvation. Christology, which must embrace a treatment of the work of Christ, comes after the discussion of sin, which is the occasion of that work. And the doctrine of the Trinity comes after the discussion of the application and appropriation of salvation, and thus after the discussion of the Holy Spirit, which has been conducted in connection with the development of the Spirit's work. The author thus always proceeds from the nearest to the more remote, from the known to the unknown, and from phenomena to their basis in reality. If he fails sometimes to get all the phenomena and thinks he is explaining them when he is not fully doing so, the fault lies in the application of the method rather than in the method itself.

Returning from this general survey, we may now look at details. The "introduction" discusses first the idea of dogma and dogmatics; and the leading thought of the author is here brought forward that the Christian life comes first, and then the knowledge of the truth, and

then the dogma, as the formulated expression of apprehended truth. Under the head of "method" the theory of the infallibility of the Scriptures is discussed. The style of treatment, illustrated by this topic, is one characteristic of the book, and leads incidentally to one of its prime excellencies. The question as to infallibility is raised by the idea of a "biblical" dogmatics, which has only to take the Scriptures as they are for its basis. This is the plan of Beck, and, having mentioned Beck's name, Bovon goes on to sketch his theory, with its principal sustaining arguments, and then to subject the whole to a sharp critique. This custom he follows throughout the work, so that upon every important point various views may be found, and critical discussion, which is always acute and sometimes profound. Beck's view of the Bible is what we are accustomed in America to call that of verbal inspiration. Bovon acknowledges that a "biblical dogmatics," such as Beck has in mind, can only be founded upon an infallible Bible, but he denies that we have in fact any such Bible. Besides fallibility in the sciences, the Bible exhibits fallibility elsewhere. Its authors make no claim for a special inspiration for their writings which is not applicable to their oral instructions and to their conduct. And they have actually erred, even in matters of doctrine. A single error, like the expectation of the near advent of the Lord, is enough to destroy Beck's theory. Hence Bovon, in accordance with his leading idea, teaches that knowledge of the truth is through the life, and that over and above the indwelling and sanctifying Spirit there is no inspiration for the writing of the Bible. Hence he calls his own system, not "biblical," but "Christian" dogmatics, because it makes Christ its central principle and develops doctrine from this as the origin. "The gospel is a historical fact, which we have not the right to change or alter; the testimony of the first witnesses of Jesus Christ remains, in this respect, the test of that which is conformed or contrary to the thought of the Master. Only, this apostolic doctrine is not a series of theological propositions placed in juxtaposition. It forms above all a living organism, because it is grouped about a living personality."

Doctrine thus springing from life, the starting point of the system is to be found in some fact of experiential knowledge. The fact of conversion, which "the believer knows," is this fact. The method of development from this fact is an experimental method. First, the facts must be determined, and when these in all their diversity are examined, then from them must be gained the general truths and the knowledge of reality, which exists for us only as it manifests itself in facts. Bovon

thus alines himself with Schleiermacher and Ritschl as a dogmatician of experience; and this suggests a reference to these theologians, and a criticism of Ritschl at some length. He praises his independence of metaphysics, and is yet inclined to accuse him of having, after all, imposed upon Christianity a philosophy foreign to its spirit. While he acknowledges, as further excellencies of this theologian, that he constantly insists upon making the Christian religion to agree with the historical work of its founder, and makes, therefore, the apostolic writings the sole norm of evangelical truth (in which points Bovon entirely follows Ritschl), he criticises him as having been too much influenced by the recoil from contemporary dogmaticians, and as having produced a kind of rationalistic moralism, in which he has weakened the idea of sin, diminished the fact of the new birth, changed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and, in his antagonism against mysticism, removed from his system elements of spirituality which he needs. Ritschlianism is "a systematic and continuous reduction of Christianity to insipidity." "What Ritschlianism needs is not scientific improvement, but the right point of departure, the religious conception, the knowledge of those two facts without which no one can ever comprehend the entire redemptive work, viz., the awful power of sin which enchains us, and the depth of the moral transformation which the Scriptures call the new birth." Frank of Erlangen comes in also for a somewhat careful criticism, which discovers his "logical incoherence."

The first book of the treatise proper begins with the study of the personality of man. It is conducted, as most of such studies are in the sequel, by means of a historical review, so that a great deal of matter strictly belonging only to a history of doctrine is incorporated in the work. The usual positions which are to be expected of a nineteenth century dogmatician are taken upon the constitution and faculties of the soul, upon trichotomy, etc. Curiously, no clear-cut doctrine of the freedom of the will is to be found. Such as it is, the doctrine is developed in connection with the new birth. This is introduced as the characteristic thing in Christianity, after considerable discussion of the nature of religion. "At the root of this radical transformation is the sacrifice by which the Ego abdicates in order to surrender itself to the Savior. . . . The Infinite appears to us under the aspect of a distinct personality whom we know ourselves free to resist. From the contact of God and man results, at the instant when the shock is produced, a double phenomenon. In the first case, the Ego effaces itself. Conscious of its weakness, it submits, it gives itself up. Under the second

influence, on the contrary, the Ego affirms itself. Strong in its moral dignity, it declares in the face of the universe that it is free and responsible for its actions." Here is the antinomy of dependence and liberty, the like of which are to be found at other points of the system. From this point Bovon is led to a discussion of the general topic of the religious consciousness of dependence, which carries him into criticisms of Schleiermacher and Kant. The latter philosopher he employs to establish his own doctrine of liberty. But this is later weakened, when the subject of sin comes up for treatment, and we are left in such fog as this, that "we are so far slaves as not to be able to save ourselves; but so far free as to appropriate the grace which God offers us," which, logically, is rank determinism.

We may now pass rapidly over a number of points. The "proofs" of the existence of God Bovon finds defective and unable to convince an unbeliever, and hence of no apologetic value at all. The sole real proof is that of personal experience. The proofs serve only to make more precise the knowledge of God which we thus obtain. This is far from the position of Ritschl, whom Bovon claims in his own support, for Ritschl said, not that the proofs give us nothing, but that they cannot give us the full idea of God, who is essentially the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Bovon will run great risk of seeing his treatment of the subject charged with undue subjectivism. We pass over the whole prolonged discussion upon sin, remarking only that it is a good, strong, affirmative doctrine. We must, however, glance a little more at length at the positive doctrine of the Scriptures which he sets forth, and then at his Christology. After these, the doctrine of regeneration, the church, and the future state may be dismissed with the remark that the eschatology is feeble, the final fate of the wicked being considered a mystery "entirely insoluble."

As to the Scriptures, then, Bovon teaches that they depend upon divine revelation. "If human existence had not been troubled by sin, revelation would be one and the same with natural development, each moral victory gained carrying with it a corresponding progress in the knowledge of God; there would, therefore, be no occasion of speaking of a special divine revelation." There is, however, revelation; yet this is not the mere communication of truths which man could not learn of himself. "The vice of this theory is its intellectualism. To suppose that divine revelation is a communication of true ideas is to suppose that sin consists in the formation of false notions." Revelation is rather a purification and strengthening of the consciousness of God in man.

It is made, first of all, in Jesus Christ, and Christ "reveals to us first of all the moral qualities of God, to which his metaphysical attributes are always subordinated." Hence revelation may be essentially defined as "the supernatural manifestation, of God, rendering himself evident to man in spite of sin, to effect the salvation of the world." In discussing at a later point the doctrine of inspiration, Bovon repeats the positions on inspiration reported above. The true value of the Bible is that it is "the authentic document of revelation." As such it makes a part of the revelation itself. Hence we infer that God has not left to hazard the formation of this book, but has exerted upon its writers an influence to which the name of inspiration has been given. What was the exact result of inspiration? Did it suppress the play of the faculties of the writers? Bovon's reply is, No. The inspiration of the Bible is religious, that is, bears exclusively upon the verities of the faith. There are also degrees of inspiration, according to the directness or the remoteness with which any matter affects our knowledge of the revelation given in Christ. In a word, for "plenary and uniform inspiration" Bovon "substitutes religious and unequal."

The discussion of Christology begins with a historical review, and with a critique of modern theories, including the kenotic. Bovon proposes to avoid the fault of the ancient Christology which subjected itself to the yoke of a philosophy essentially pagan and foreign to the spirit of the gospel. He begins with the evangelical history, proceeding from the unity of the living person of Jesus Christ. At first view he appears like one of us, and, in fact, like us he "learns obedience by the things which he suffers." But he is perfectly obedient, and this calls for an explanation, this immunity from the common lot of men. Accepting the evangelical account of the miraculous conception, we have an explanation, and readily assign to him the title of "Son" in a unique sense. But we have another fact to explain, the incomparable greatness of his personality, a personality absolutely authoritative in the religious sphere. We are assisted somewhat by the phrase "the second Adam," and we are to conceive him as realizing in a unique sense the goal and destiny of man.

Now, it is just because he is thus man that he is adapted to display the perfections of God, for men are "of the race of God." Believers are sons of God, when they do his will, and in this fact is the key to the explanation of the sonship of Christ. But is not this to confound the divinity of the Son with his perfect holiness? Christians are also holy. In what, then, would consist the proper divinity of Jesus? To

say that God becomes incarnate in Jesus Christ is to say that the essence of God appears in humanity. That essence is his love and holiness. It is, therefore, to affirm that God objectifies his perfection in an authoritative human life. Now, the love and the holiness of God are not communicated according to the laws of the transmission of physical forces, but like spiritual forces, in the possession of which we progress by the free action of the will. God being a person in consequence of his religious qualities and not of his ontological attributes, this revelation of his perfect life in Jesus is a personal manifestation, the definite and supreme expression of our knowledge of God our Savior. Is, then, Christ Son of God only by his obedience?

Before answering this question, Bovon interjects a premise out of his theory of knowledge. One must not put the moral conception in antagonism to the metaphysical, and say that other men are the sons of God in a moral sense, Christ in an ontological. It is repugnant to the spirit of the gospel to separate between *act* and *being*, since the idea of *life* embraces them both. We are, therefore, to turn aside from this distinction and try to understand the matter by different methods.

Christ is the mediator. The distinction which exists between us and the Savior is that his perfection shows itself to be creative, while ours is derivative. Whatever success we attain in the struggle against evil in the world we owe to Christ, who alone gives us the knowledge of the Father and leads us to God. When he enters into the sanctuary of his own consciousness, he finds there the eternally active perfections of the Omnipotent. Act and Being are united in Life. God-Man by nature, Christ becomes this also by voluntary consecration. In him God descends into the man, as the man elevates himself towards God.

We have thus the complete idea of Bovon, but he makes it a little clearer by his discussion of the preëxistence of Christ, which he conducts in connection with the text, Before Abraham was, I am. In the first place, the preëxistence is not an ideal preëxistence, such as Beyschlag, and the Ritschlians in general, teach. The "I" who is before Abraham is the Christ himself, the Messiah born of a woman, who lived upon the earth, and who pronounced these words. The present tense "I Am" shows, however, that the Lord is not contemplating successive periods, but a state which dominates times and change. And, of course, the idea of a preëxistent humanity is not for a moment to be entertained. What is the explanation? Theology may, perhaps, lift a corner of the veil which will ever hang over this mystery in the following manner: We have to do here with the prob-

lem of psychological history, not with ontology. The question is, What judgment did Christ form of himself? He had the consciousness, alone of all upon earth, of realizing in himself the creative life of the Eternal. When he directed his view upon himself and sounded the depths of his own being, his gaze pierced the veil which arrests us. Behind the net which entangles us he discovered God himself, the sovereign personality whose holiness he manifests among men. In one word, his consciousness, passing beyond time and its phenomena, leaps into eternity. In the sublime hours when Christ discerned his origin, behind the terrestrial "I" he saw only the Father, he identified himself with the immutable God, he knew himself to be eternal in his creative life, in the divine power which flowed forth from him; and since the biblical intuition, which is that of the popular language, expresses eternity by anteriority or preëxistence, Jesus knew himself as personally preëxistent.

We pause in our review of this remarkable work. Its tendencies and its worth will be evident to everyone acquainted with theology. It represents among the Swiss what its closely related contemporary in Germany, Ritschlianism, represents, the fear of "ontology," the disposition to accept the New Testament Scriptures as a record of facts, which facts are to be interpreted in the light of modern ideas, and to refuse to the explanation of those facts found in the New Testament, and to most, if not all, of the supernatural portion of New Testament and church theology, all validity. No one can read the work without learning much; but we regard this fundamental defect of method, this fear which resembles a superstition, as a fatal blemish in the book, and the cause of what is, after all, a failure in the attempt to reproduce a "Christian" theology.

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CHRISTIAN ETHICS. Eight lectures preached before the University of Oxford in the year 1895, on the foundation of the late Rev. John Bampton, M.A. By T. B. STRONG, M.A., Student of Christ Church. London: Longmans; New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1896. Pp. xxviii+380, 8vo. 12s.

AN APOLOGETIC vindication of Christian ethics today must have reference to two main lines of attack. Positivism maintains that Christian morality does not stand for love for love's sake, duty for